



County of Los Angeles  
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DAVID E. JANSSEN  
Chief Administrative Officer

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October 13, 2004

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Los Angeles  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY ALL-HAZARD-MITIGATION PLAN (ALL AFFECTED)  
(3 VOTES)**

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:**

1. Approve the County of Los Angeles All-Hazard Mitigation Plan.
2. Instruct the Chief Administrative Officer's (CAO's) Office of Emergency Management (OEM) to forward the plan to the California Office of Emergency Services (OES), requesting an expedited review and that they forward the plan to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for approval;
3. Delegate authority to the CAO to approve changes to the plan which may be requested by OES or FEMA and to approve future changes to mitigation strategies within the plan.

**PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION**

FEMA is authorized through Federal legislation to provide funding for disaster relief, recovery, and some hazard mitigation planning. The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000), authorized in Public Law 106-390, is the latest legislation intended to strengthen hazard mitigation planning.

This plan was developed to comply with the new law and to demonstrate the County's high level of commitment to pre-disaster hazard mitigation programs. This is the first Countywide mitigation plan, and OEM is committed to keeping the plan up-to-date through an annual review beginning January 2006. The plan provides a valuable repository of information for departments preparing applications for mitigation grants.

DMA 2000 adds a new requirement that beginning on November 4, 2004, states and local governments must have an OES- and FEMA-approved mitigation plan in place prior to receiving Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funds. The most significant impact is on post-disaster HMPG. After the 1994 Northridge Earthquake, communities in Los Angeles County received over \$600 million in post-disaster HMPG funds. Much of this money went to schools and hospitals, based on State and FEMA HMPG priorities, but in a future disaster, County programs could stand to lose HMPG funds, depending on the HMPG priorities established by OES and FEMA.

It is apparent that plan reviews at OES and FEMA will take a significant length of time, given that every local government in the nation is required to complete a plan. According to OES, if there is a major disaster affecting Los Angeles County before our plan is approved, FEMA will accelerate their plan review and work with the County and other affected local governments to ensure that the plan is approved in time to establish HMPG eligibility. The HMPG program does not become available until six to nine months after a major disaster.

Los Angeles County and most other governments in California, including the largest cities in Los Angeles County, were not able to comply with the November 4 deadline because of the complex requirements for these plans. The only local government in California with an approved plan is the city of Berkeley. The four largest cities in Los Angeles County are on about the same schedule as the County in their planning process and expect to submit their plans during the first week of November. The County Office of Education is on the same planning timeline as the County.

The FEMA rule required an extensive and complex planning process, which we began in September 2003, shortly after Federal and State guidance was received. The FEMA rule implementing this law requires that the plan meet specific requirements, including a public comment process, a review of existing plans, and extensive descriptions of all of the hazards that could affect the County. In order to comply with the extensive FEMA requirements, our plan is over 2000 pages long, and required a sustained twelve-month effort by our contractor and affected County departments. Mitigation programs in disaster-prone Los Angeles County are complex, and by the nature of our government services, the County plan is much longer and more complex than any other local government plan in California.

We are requesting that that your Board delegate approval for future plan updates to the CAO. This will ensure that we can keep the plan current as County mitigation programs are implemented. Although we expect OES and FEMA to approve this plan in this submission, either agency may request changes, and this delegated authority will ensure that we can make any required changes promptly.

### **Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals**

This plan supports the following goals in the County Strategic Plan:

- Goal 1, "Service Excellence," and Goal 6, "Community Services," by supporting mitigation programs that will benefit our communities;
- Goal 3, "Organizational Effectiveness," by providing supporting materials for mitigation grant applications; and
- Goal 4, "Fiscal Responsibility," and Goal 8, "Public Safety," by establishing goals and priorities for mitigation projects, and ensuring eligibility for Federal hazard mitigation grants.

### **FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING**

This plan development was funded through Federal grants to support hazard mitigation planning and terrorism preparedness planning. OEM spent \$178,000 in grant funds to develop the plan through contracts with Dimension Unlimited, Inc., a company which specializes in hazard mitigation planning and grant writing.

### **FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

DMA 2000, Section 322, authorized in Public Law 106-390, requires that states and local governments must have a FEMA-approved mitigation plan in place in order to be eligible for HMGP funds.

### **IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)**

This plan has no impact on current services or projects, but will provide a repository of information to assist departments in applying for future hazard mitigation grants.

### **CONCLUSION**

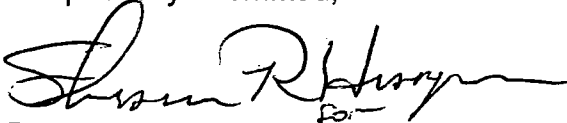
This plan was developed expressly for County government. Because of the short planning timeframe, the political complexity of the County, and the complexity of the planning process, we determined that it was not feasible to do a multi-jurisdictional plan. All other local governments must develop their own plans and submit them to OES and FEMA for approval.

Honorable Board of Supervisors  
October 13, 2004  
Page 4

OEM notified local cities, school districts, and special districts of this requirement and has provided resources to assist in the development of local plans. In addition, OEM coordinated OES training for local governments. County departments that provide contracted services to cities are supporting contract city mitigation planning efforts. OEM has provided information and tools to local governments.

An executive summary of the plan is attached to this letter. Questions regarding the Los Angeles County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan should be directed to Constance Perett, OEM Administrator at (323) 980-2261 or [cperett@lacoec.org](mailto:cperett@lacoec.org).

Respectfully submitted,



DAVID E. JANSSEN  
Chief Administrative Officer

DEJ:CP  
BB:jl

Attachments

- c: County Counsel
- Emergency Management Council
- Emergency Management Council Steering Committee
- Emergency Management Council Subcommittee
- Multi-Hazard Mitigation Advisory Committee

# **Executive Summary- Los Angeles County All-Hazard Mitigation Plan**

## **Introduction and Purpose**

This is the first edition of the Los Angeles County All-Hazard Mitigation Plan, and through completion of this plan the County continues many years of commitment to the reduction of risks through hazard mitigation planning. Los Angeles County has long been a nationwide leader in emergency planning and preparedness. In particular, the key public safety and emergency management departments - Sheriff, Fire, Health Services, Public Works, and the Chief Administrative Office (CAO) Office of Emergency Management- have been proactive in planning to reduce potential damage and loss from disasters. The County Board of Supervisors has supported innumerable major mitigation programs such as: the multi-million dollar County Emergency Operations Center which opened in 1995; the Emergency Survival Program (an innovative and effective program which provides disaster preparedness community education); a recent commitment to Countywide Business Continuity Planning; and strong support for terrorism preparedness programs.

Los Angeles County is subject to a wide range of destructive disasters, from earthquakes, floods, and wildfires, to human-caused disasters, such as terrorist acts and civil disturbances. In the disaster-rich decade of the 1990s, the County was named in nine federal disaster declarations, including the 1994 Northridge Earthquake, which caused more than \$20 billion in damage. With a large urban population and vulnerability to a wide range of disasters, the County's long-standing commitment to all-hazard mitigation programs plays a significant role in loss reduction and public safety.

Section 203 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Assistance and Emergency Relief Act (Stafford Act), 42 USC, as amended by Section 102 of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, requires all state and local governments to develop comprehensive mitigation plans as a condition of eligibility for future post-disaster mitigation grants after November 4, 2004. This plan complies with this law, subject to receipt and approval by the California Office of Emergency Services (OES) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The disasters of the 1990s created eligibility for \$600 million in post-disaster hazard mitigation grants for communities within the Operational Area. The County can also lose eligibility for Federal pre-disaster mitigation grants. As one example of mitigation grant funding, Public Works received \$1.8 million in 2002 from FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program to elevate flood-prone structures located near Malibu Lake in the unincorporated community of Agoura.

This plan is the first Countywide compilation of future mitigation strategies and programs. Information contained in the plan will provide a framework and a rich repository of resource information to support future mitigation grant applications from any County department.

The plan will be shared in electronic format with all local governments within the Los Angeles County Operational Area to encourage and assist them in their mitigation planning activities.

## **Scope**

FEMA implemented the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 and published their requirements for all future hazard mitigation planning in February 2002. The State of California implemented the program in California in the summer and fall of 2003 with guidelines and training sessions. The law requires extensive documentation of the community, the region, its hazards, history and future plans. Some examples include:

- Formation of a Hazard Mitigation Advisory Committee with by-laws, regular meetings, records of the agendas and minutes, subcommittees, and action plans. This group was tasked with prioritizing the hazards, collecting the history and documentation, and formulating future mitigation strategies. The planning committee was headed by the CAO's Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and included public safety and human services county departments, local cities, County Office of Education, and special districts.

## **Executive Summary – Los Angeles County All-Hazard mitigation plan**

- A complete disaster risk analysis with historic reviews of disasters in the County and an analysis of damage projections for future disasters. This risk analysis also prioritized risks in high, moderate and low risk categories. The mitigation strategies included in the plan are primarily for high-risk disasters.
- The law included specific requirements for:
  - documentation of the process the County has implemented to prioritize and study the hazards and to prepare the plan and conduct the analysis required;
  - extensive outreach to the public and to other political jurisdictions in the County, inviting comment and input into the plan on both the risk prioritization and hazard mitigation strategies;
  - setting future goals and tasks to carry out the overall mitigation plan;
  - review and incorporation of existing plans, studies, reports and technical information;
  - a listing of local ordinances which affect or promote disaster mitigation; and
  - details of ongoing mitigation projects.
- This plan is for the County of Los Angeles and covers mitigation responsibilities of County departments. Because of the complex array of local governments, the plan could not reasonably address mitigation planning for each of the 88 cities and 94 school districts and over 100 other special districts covered by the law. The plan addresses all major natural and human-caused disasters that fall within the responsibilities of County departments within the geographic County.
- County unincorporated areas have a population of more than one million. This plan addresses issues related to unincorporated areas, but also to residents in the cities within Los Angeles County, since the County provides many services to all residents. In addition, Sheriff, Fire, and Public Works provide contracted services to many of the 88 cities in Los Angeles County. Each of those cities is responsible for completion of their own mitigation plans, but the County plan addresses many mitigation goals and strategies that cross political boundaries.

### **Plan Overview**

The plan has been formulated to meet the Federal Law requirements and to serve as a reference document and basis for hazard mitigation projects and grant applications for Countywide hazard mitigation programs. This document will assist all jurisdictions in the County in providing the base information and hazard and geographic descriptions required in reference to all related disaster grant and planning programs.

The plan is divided into seven sections:

#### **Section 1 – Introduction**

This section contains the formal language outlining the purpose, mission statement, legal authorities and constraints to strategy implementation. The constraints are those circumstances that the County has no control over that would keep the County from implementing mitigation measures for a disaster risk. The constraints most often cited are economic constraints, manpower constraints and lack of legal authority to respond to a risk with mitigation measures.

#### **Section 2 – Hazard Mitigation Planning Process**

This section explains the process the Los Angeles County Hazard Mitigation Planning Advisory Committee used in sharing data, developing strategies, and devising implementation programs. It details the processes used to inform

citizens, businesses, and adjacent jurisdictions of the planning project and the methods used to solicit public input. This section lists the Hazard Mitigation Planning Advisory Committee by-laws, goals, objectives and tasks. It also contains copies of the minutes of meetings of the Hazard Mitigation Planning Advisory Committee and the Fire, Geographic Information System (GIS) and Public Works Sub-committees.

### **Section 3 – Demographics and Statistics**

This section is an in-depth “encyclopedia” of Los Angeles County which will be used in grant application preparation. It contains detailed lists of assets owned by the County as well as those assets determined to be critical to fulfilling the requirements of the County’s mission in times of emergency or disaster. The Planning process requires a description with replacement costs for critical County assets. This information helps in the development of the Hazard Vulnerability Analysis. The CAO’s Risk Management Division contributed extensively to this section to assure the data included was complete, current, and reliable.

### **Section 4 – Hazard Vulnerability Analysis**

This section is divided into Natural and Technological/Human-caused Hazards and gives a detailed analysis of each of the risks cited by the Hazard Mitigation Planning Advisory Committee in preparation of the plan. Past hazard-specific mitigation projects are discussed as well as specific vulnerabilities and impacts. Projections of damage (dollars, facilities and people) are listed for the high risk priority hazards. FEMA requires that the County demonstrate an in-depth analysis of vulnerability in relationship to population, geographic area, jurisdictional relationships, resources, and disaster mitigation options for future actions.

#### **Section 4B: Natural, Technological, and Human-caused Hazards**

Los Angeles County is at risk for a variety of natural and human-caused disasters, and the Hazard Mitigation Planning Advisory Committee established priorities for these risks, taking into account the concerns of the public as expressed in the public input process. The priorities were determined based on the probable effects of each disaster risk, including potential magnitude (including economic impact), frequency, distribution of damage, demographics of areas potentially affected, and the degree of vulnerability. Priorities established for each hazard will guide mitigation planning, with the highest risk hazards receiving the highest level of attention.

The natural hazards and their relative priority are summarized in the chart below:

<b>High Risk Priority Hazards</b>	<b>Moderate Risk Priority Hazards</b>	<b>Low Risk Priority Hazards</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Earthquake</li><li>• Wildland Urban Interface Fire</li><li>• WMD Terrorism</li><li>• Utility Loss</li><li>• Flood</li><li>• Drought</li><li>• Biological/Health</li><li>• Waste Water and Water</li><li>• Economic Disruption</li><li>• Data Telecommunications</li><li>• Civil Unrest</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Large Venue Fires</li><li>• Transportation Incidents, rail air/pipeline</li><li>• Hazardous Materials</li><li>• Radiological Incident/Accident</li><li>• Special Events</li><li>• Dam Failure</li><li>• Landslides</li><li>• Transportation/loss of ability</li><li>• Explosion</li><li>• Severe Weather</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Biological/Agriculture</li><li>• Tsunami</li><li>• Sinkholes/subsidence</li><li>• Rise in Ground Water</li><li>• Mine Safety</li><li>• Volcano</li><li>• Tornadoes</li></ul>

## **Executive Summary – Los Angeles County All-Hazard mitigation plan**

This report also includes a history of disasters in Los Angeles County since 1950, including the costs and number of deaths and injuries caused by each disaster. This information validated the priority ranking of disasters.

In recent years, particularly since the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, American society has become much more concerned about human-caused disasters. In recent history, Los Angeles County has experienced two of the most costly and disruptive civil disturbance emergencies in American history—the 1965 Watts Riot and the 1992 Rodney King Riot.

Section 4B of the plan includes a comprehensive history and discussion of these types of human-caused disasters. The section also includes discussions of other hazards associated with human progress and urban development, such as economic disruption, water and power emergencies, and data/telecommunications disruptions.

This information will be invaluable in assisting in the preparation of future hazard mitigation projects and in the development of County emergency management plans. The information will also assist in public education campaigns and other public information outreach.

### **Section 5 – Strategies**

This section is a catalog of strategies for mitigation of each of the High Risk and Moderate Risk Priority Hazards detailed in Section 4.

The strategies listed include the general description of the strategy, the organization/department responsible for the strategy, implementation time line, the cost, and the goal and hazard addressed. All of the strategies listed for High Risk Priority Hazards are considered Priority One hazard mitigation strategies; those strategies listed for Moderate Risk Priority Hazards are considered Priority Two hazard mitigation strategies. Typical strategies include: seismic protection projects, flood hazard reduction projects, security projects, technological protection, economic loss protection projects, public information projects, medical and biological preparedness and identification through feasibility studies for other potential projects.

### **Section 6 – Goals**

This section lists Primary Specific Goals and Actions and Long-term Goals, Objectives and Actions regarding this new Hazard Mitigation Planning program. The implementation of these goals and objectives will be based on the County's fiscal and operational capabilities; this part of the plan is a roadmap for the County to follow where feasible, not a commitment to take specific actions.

### **Section 7 – Plan Maintenance**

This section is the detailed guidance to be employed to keep the plan current, circulated, and to maintain continuity in the public input process. It also lists what needs to be done to prepare the plan for its five-year approval submission to FEMA.

Any disaster plan must be periodically reviewed and kept up-to-date. The Office of Emergency Management will maintain the plan through annual updates, completed in collaboration with key County departments and agencies. FEMA requires the plan to be submitted every five years for re-approval, which must include a progress report on the implementation of the disaster strategies. This maintenance process will ensure that the plan, when re-submitted every five years, reflects the status of the up-to-the-minute hazard mitigation program for Los Angeles County. The plan will need to be updated following a major disaster in the County in order to include any new mitigation strategies the County may consider implementing with post-disaster grants.